

Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 SS-20 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 NSC-10 AID-20 L-03 IGA-02 OMB-01 ACDA-19 SPC-03

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 579

INFO SECDEF PRIORITY

CINCPAC

S E C R E T SEOUL 6967

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS KS

SUBJECT: POLITICAL IMPACT OF MAJOR MAP CUTS IN KOREA

REF: STATE 200320

1. IF MAP FUNDS ARE CURTAILED AND APPORTIONED AS INDICATED IN PARA 5 REFTEL, IT WILL MEAN THAT FY 74 PROGRAM FOR KOREA WILL FUND PROCUREMENT FOR 25 F-5'S AND ALMOST NOTHING ELSE OUTSIDE OF TRAINING. SUCH MAJOR PROGRAMS AS CPIC AND AIR DEFENSE BUILD-UP, WHICH WE HAVE CONTINUALLY EMPHASIZED IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH ROKS, WILL BE ELIMINATED FOR FY 74. WE WILL, IN EFFECT, BE PUTTING A ONE-YEAR MORATORIUM ON THE MODERNIZATION PLAN WITH NO REAL ASSURANCE OF ANY FUTURE FAVORABLE CONGRESSIONAL ACTION.

2. SUCH AN ACTION THIS YEAR AND THE INDEFINITENESS OF FUTURE CONGRESSIONAL ACTION WILL BE INTERPRETED BY ROKG AS SUBSTANTIAL END TO MOD PLAN AND CONTRARY TO REPEATED HIGH-LEVEL ASSURANCES WE HAVE MADE REGARDING OUR INTENTION TO FULFILL MOD PLAN OBJECTIVES (MOST RECENTLY AT SECURITY CONSULTATIVE

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MEETING IN SEPTEMBER). ROKG KNOWS THAT IT WILL

NOT RECEIVE ANYTHING LIKE OUR FY 74 \$241 MILLION (LESS PCH&T) CONGRESSIONAL REQUEST AND HAS BEEN WARNED OF OVERALL PROGRAM STRETCHOUT. REALISTICALLY, IT PROBABLY EXPECTS SOMETHING AT ABOUT FY 73 PROGRAM LEVEL (\$120--\$130 MILLION). WE HAVE ALSO WARNED THEM IN PAST MONTHS ABOUT O&M PROBLEM AND LIEKLIHOOD ANDY "O" SA WILL BE LESS THAN \$35 MILLION CEILING.

3. HOWEVER, SA LEVEL WHICH IS DRASTICALLY LESS THAN THE FY 73 LEVEL AND WHICH ELIINATES OR SUSPENDS MAJOR ONGOING MOD PLAN "I" PROJECTS SIMPLY WOULD NOT BE UNDERSTOOD BY ROKG.

4. WE WOULD EXPECT ROKG REACTION TO BE ONE OF SHOCK, CHARGING US WITH AD FAITH AND POINTING TO IMPACT ON ROK SECURITY POSITION. WHILE REACTION WOULD BE OVERSTATED, IT WOULD BE REAL AND POSE SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS FOR US IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. WE FEAR ROKG WOULD VIEW A GREATLY REDUCED MAP AS CLEAR EVIDENCE OF A LOWER US SENSE OF COMMITMENT TO ROK SECURITY AND DOUBTS ABOUT OUR INTENTIONS WOULD INEVITABLY BE INCREASED. FURTHER,ROKG WOULD POINT OUT THAT MASSIVE REDUCTION CAME WITHOUT WARNING AND AFTER 1974 ROK BUDGET ALREADY DETERMINED AND PRESENTED TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. WHATEVER EXPLANATION WE PROFESSED, MANY KOREANS AND OTHERS MIGHT ALSO READ CUTS ENVISAGED AS US REACTION TO RECENT ROKG ACTIONS IN DOMESTIC FIELD AND TREND TOWARD AUTHORITARIANISM.

5. SHOCK TO ROKG EXPECTATIONS AND REAL OR EXAGGERATED REACTIONS OF THE KOREANS ARE NOT IN AND OF THEMSELVES WHOLE PROBLEM. WE WOULD BE WEAKENING ROK CONFIDENCE IN THEIR OWN SECURITY AND IN US AT A TIME OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT. AT SAME TIME MAJOR REDUCTION US MILITARY ASSISTANCE WOULD NOT GO UNNOTICED BY OTHERS, INCLUDING JAPANESE AND COMMUNIST POWERS.

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6. IN SUM, IT IS OUR VIEW THAT ANY SA LEVEL, WHICH IS SIGNIFICANTLY BELOW FY 73 LEVEL, WOULD CAUSE US DIFFICULTIES HERE. EXTREMELY LOW LEVEL PROJECTED PARA 5 REFTTEL AND ITS SUBSEQUENT IMPACT ON ROK SA PROGRAM WOULD POSE MOST SERIOUS PROBLEMS WITH ROKG, CALLING INTO QUESTION OUR INTENTIONS RE MOD PLAN AND OUR COMMITMENT TO ROKG

SECURITY. THERE WOULD BE SERIOUS SCARS LEFT WHICH
COULD AFFECT OUR POLITICAL/MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS.
LOW LEVEL CONTEMPLATED PARA 5 REFTEL WOULD ALSO
FORCE MAJOR USG REVIEW AND DECISIONS RE OUR
ABILITY TO MEET OVERALL MOD PLAN OBJECTIVES AS
WELL AS CARRY THROUGH INDIVIDUAL MAJOR, HIGH
PRIORITY ONGOING PROGRAMS.

7. SEPTTEL CONTAINS DETAILED PROGRAM IMPACTS AS
WELL AS MILITARY CONSIDERATIONS.
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